AUTOMATED CONTRACT INFORMATION

Initial system (mid-1966) allowed for periodic input of contractor and inspection reports under "Due" and "Received" headings but the program was not capable of selecting only the latest data in such a periodic field nor could it compare a due date with a received date to determine that a report was overdue. During the first four or five months of the initial system's life, special requirements placed more of a burden on the system that the regularly scheduled items.

Requirements of the system written into the Project Officer's Handbook meant modifying, converting or reprogramming the existing machine routines.

After generally surveying the rqmts for a total integrated management information system, I have concluded that such a system is not really feasible without on-line remote terminals. This conclusion is concretely supported by the experience of organizations who have successfully implemented such applications. These applications are few in number to date due to lack of experience by computer systems analysts and programmers in their use. Generally speaking, usage design is five years behind hardware availability. Each day of delay increases this lag exponentially. OCS is no exception and is just beginning a 12-18 month experimental phase with a few remote installations. DDS&T should definitely be involved in the experimental stage for several reasons:

1) We shld set the example for the offices, some of whom have already ordered remote terminal installations.
2) The usage experience, even in experimental stage is as important to us as to the software designers.
3) The contract information file can be updated on a daily and error-free basis and made quickly responsive to a variety of random queries by all levels ofmanagement, as envisioned by the Handbook.
4) It will promote design flexibility for expansion of this basic system to include other data bases.

(This impinges on the DDS responsibility for designing a total information system which is a major influence on the thinking of the Director of OCS in responding to rqmts with his limited resources.)

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